

## Specification

### 1. Title of the Invention

#### METHOD FOR IMPROVING MEAT QUALITY OF FISH MEAT

### 2. What is Claimed is:

1. A method for improving the meat quality of fish meat, comprising:  
adding 0.1 to 10%, relative to a weight of fish meat, of a single compound or a combination thereof selected from the group consisting of sodium phosphate, sodium bicarbonate, sodium citrate, and sucrose fatty acid esters to fillets, slices, or small pieces of fish meat,  
further adding 0.01 to 1% of ascorbic acid if necessary,  
allowing the fish meat to stand in these compounds for a given period of time,  
adjusting a pH to between 6 and 8, and then  
allowing the fish meat to age.

### 3. Detailed Description of the Invention

An objective of the present invention is to suppress peculiar odors that occur in common fish types, for example Alaska pollack, hoki, white croaker, and cod, which are common types of white fish, and mackerel, sardine, bonito, and tuna, which are common types of red fish. Specifically, the present invention relates to a method for suppressing a sourness that is generally disliked by consumers and peculiar odor of fish that exhibit a strong sour flavor and raw taste/odor (blood smell), such as mackerel, sardines, bonito, and tuna and simultaneously suppressing severe thermal coagulation, which often occurs when the fish are heat treated.

In recent years, large quantities of fish meat have come to be consumed by binding lumps of fish meat together or using loins for fish steaks or patties. In addition, large quantities of steaks and patties of bonito, mackerel, tuna, and cod have come to be used as such raw materials. However, such raw materials can exhibit a strong acidity depending on the type of fish and, when subjected to heat treatment, coagulate excessively to produce hard fish meat having a peculiar odor, which is generally not liked by consumers.

Flavorings such as pepper, laurel, garlic, and ginger were used in the past in order merely to suppress these odors. However, using large quantities of these flavorings causes the problem of the original fish flavor being lost and does not bring about a significant improvement in the hardness of the fish meat.